Myles, A Bauman's

PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY CONCERNING HUMAN LIBERTY.

THE FOURTH EDITION, CORRECTED.

by Anthony Collins.

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PREFACE.

TOO much care cannot be taken, to prevent being miſunderſtood and prejudged, in handling queſtions of ſuch nice ſpeculation, as thoſe of liberty and neceſſity: and therefore, though I might in juſtice expect to be read before any judgment be paſſed on me, I think it proper to premiſe the following obſervations.

1. *Firſt, though I deny liberty in a certain meaning of that word; yet I contend for liberty, as it ſignifies* a power in man, to do as he wills, or pleaſes; *which is the notion of liberty*

maintained by ARISTOTLE, CICERO, *Mr.* LOCKE, *and ſeveral other philoſophers, ancient and modern. And indeed after a careful examination of the beſt authors who have treated of liberty, I may affirm, that however oppoſite they appear in words to one another, and how much ſoever ſome of them ſeem to maintain another notion of liberty; yet at the bottom, there is an almoſt univerſal agreement in the notion defended by me, and all that they ſay, when examined, will be found to amount to no more.*

2. *Secondly, when I affirm neceſſity, I contend only for what is called* moral neceſſity, *meaning thereby, that* man, who is an intelligent and ſenſible being,

ing, is determined by his reaſon and his ſenſes; *and I deny man to be ſubject to ſuch neceſſity, as is in clocks, watches, and ſuch other beings, which for want of* ſenſation and intelligence *are ſubject to an* abſolute, phyſical, or mechanical neceſſity. *And here alſo I have the concurrence of almoſt all the greateſt aſſerters of liberty, who either expreſly maintain* moral neceſſity, *or the thing ſignified by thoſe words.*

3. *Thirdly, I have undertaken to ſhew that the notions, I advance, are ſo far from being inconſiſtent with, that they are the ſole foundations of, morality and laws, and of rewards and puniſhments in ſociety; and that the notions, I*

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explode, are ſubverſive of them. This I judged neceſſary to make out, in treating a ſubject that has relation to morality; becauſe nothing can be true which ſubverts thoſe things; and all diſcourſe muſt be defective, wherein the reader perceives any diſagreement to moral truth; *which is as evident as any ſpeculative truth, and much more neceſſary to be rendered clear to the reader's mind, than truth in all other ſciences.*

4. *Fourthly, I have intituled my diſcourſe,* a Philoſophical Inquiry, etc; *becauſe I propoſe only to prove my point by experience and by reaſon, omitting all conſiderations ſtrictly theological. By this method I have reduced the matter*

to a ſhort compaſs: and hope, I ſhall give no leſs ſatisfaction, than if I had conſidered it alſo theologically; for all but Enthuſiaſts muſt think true theology *conſiſtent with reaſon, and with experience.*

5. *Fifthly, if any ſhould aſk,* of what uſe *ſuch a diſcourſe is? I might offer to their conſideration, firſt, the* uſefulneſs *of truth in general: and ſecondly, the uſefulneſs of the truths I maintain towards eſtabliſhing laws and morality, rewards and puniſhments in ſociety: but ſhall content myſelf with obſerving that it may be* of uſe *to all thoſe who deſire to know the truth in the queſtions I handle, and that think*

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examination the proper means to arrive at that knowlege. As for thoſe, who either make no inquiries at all, and concern not themſelves about any ſpeculations; or who take up with ſpeculations, without any examination; or who read only books to confirm themſelves in the ſpeculations they have received; I allow my book to be of no uſe *to them: but yet think they may allow others to enjoy a taſte different from their own.*

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PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY CONCERNING HUMAN LIBERTY.

Anthony Collins

To LUCIUS. 1715.

" I HERE ſend you in writing
" my thoughts concerning LI-
" BERTY and NECESSITY, which
" you have ſo often deſired of me: and
" in drawing them up, have had regard
" to your penetration, by being as ſhort
" as is conſiſtent with being under-
" ſtood; and to your love of truth,
" by ſaying nothing but what I think
" true, and alſo all the truth that, I
" apprehend, relates to the ſubject,
" with the ſincerity belonging to the
" converſation of friends. If you

" think me either too ſhort in any re-
" ſpect, or to have omitted the con-
" ſideration of any objection by its
" not occurring to me, or, that you
" think of importance to be conſider-
" ed; be pleaſed to acquaint me there-
" with, and I will give you all the ſa-
" tisfaction I can."

Introduction. It is a common obſervation, even among the learned, that there are certain matters of ſpeculation, about which it is impoſſible, from the nature of the ſubjects themſelves, to ſpeak clearly and diſtinctly. Upon which account, men are very indulgent to, and pardon, the unintelligible diſcourſes of theologers and philoſophers, which treat of the ſublime points in theology and philoſophy. And there is no queſtion in the whole compaſs of ſpeculation, of which men have written more obſcurely, and of which it is thought more impoſſible to diſcourſe clearly, and concerning which men

men more expect, and pardon, obſcure diſcourſe, than upon the ſubjects of liberty and neceſſity. But this common obſervation is both a common and a learned error. For whoever employs his thoughts either about God or the trinity in unity, or any other profound ſubject, ought to have ſome ideas, to be the objects of his thoughts, in the ſame manner as he has in thinking on the moſt common ſubjects; for where ideas fail us in any matter, our thoughts muſt alſo fail us. And it is alſo plain, whenever we have ideas, we are able to communicate them to others by words †: for words being arbitrary marks of our ideas, we can never want them to ſignify our ideas, as long as we have ſo many in uſe among us, and a power to make as many more as we have occaſion for. Since then we

† *I do not mean unknown ſimple ideas. Theſe can at firſt only be made known by application of the object to the faculty: but when they have been once perceived, and a common name agreed upon to ſignify them, they can be communicated by words.*

can think of nothing any farther than we have ideas, and can ſignify all the ideas we have by words to one another; why ſhould we not be able to put one idea into a propoſition as well as another? Why not to compare ideas together about one ſubject as well as another? And why not to range one ſort of propoſitions into order and method, as well as another? When we uſe the term God, the idea, ſignified thereby, ought to be as diſtinct and determinate in us, as the idea of a triangle or a ſquare is, when we diſcourſe of either of them; otherwiſe the term God is an empty ſound. What hinders us then from putting the idea ſignified by the term God into a propoſition, any more than the idea of a triangle or a ſquare? And why cannot we compare that idea with another idea, as well as any two other ideas together: ſince compariſon of ideas conſiſts in obſerving wherein ideas differ,

differ, and wherein they agree: to which nothing is requiſite in any ideas, but their being diſtinct and determinate in our minds? And ſince we ought to have a diſtinct and determinate idea to the term God, whenever we uſe it, and as diſtinct and determinate as that of a triangle or a ſquare; ſince we can put it into a propoſition; ſince we can compare it with other ideas on account of its diſtinctneſs and determinateneſs; why ſhould we not be able to range our thoughts about God in as clear a method, and with as great perſpicuity, as about figure and quantity?

I would not hereby be thought to ſuppoſe, that the idea of God is an adequate idea, and exhauſts the ſubject it refers to, like the idea of a triangle or a ſquare; or that it is as eaſy to form in our minds, as the idea of a triangle or a ſquare; or that it does not require a great comprehenſion of mind to bring

together the various ideas that relate to God, and ſo compare them together; or that there are not ſeveral propoſitions concerning him that are doubtful, and of which we can arrive at no certainty; or that there are not many propoſitions concerning him ſubject to very great difficulties or objections. All theſe I grant; but ſay, they are no reaſons to juſtify obſcurity. For, firſt, an inadequate idea is no leſs diſtinct, as ſuch, than an adequate idea, and no leſs true, as far as it goes; and therefore may be diſcourſed of with equal clearneſs and truth. Secondly, though the idea of God be not ſo eaſy to form in our minds as the idea of a triangle or a ſquare, and it requires a great comprehenſion of mind to bring together the various ideas that relate to him, and compare them together; yet theſe are only reaſons, for uſing a greater application, or for not writing at all. Thirdly, if a writer has, in relation to his

his ſubject, any doubts or objections in his mind, which he cannot reſolve to his own ſatisfaction, he may expreſs thoſe conceptions or thoughts no leſs clearly, than any other conceptions or thoughts. He ſhould only take care not to exceed the bounds of thoſe conceptions, nor endeavour to make his reader underſtand what he does not underſtand himſelf: for when he exceeds thoſe bounds, his diſcourſe muſt be dark, and his pains uſeleſs. To expreſs what a man conceives is the end of writing; and every reader ought to be ſatisfied, when he ſees an author ſpeak of a ſubject according to the light he has about it, ſo far as to think him a clear writer.

When therefore any writer ſpeaks obſcurely, either about God, or any other idea of his mind, the defect is in him. For why did he write before he had a meaning; or before he was able to expreſs to others what he

meant? Is it not unpardonable for a man to cant, who pretends to teach?

Theſe general reflections may be confirmed by matter of fact from the writings of the moſt celebrated dogmatical authors.

When ſuch great men as GASSENDUS, CARTESIUS, CUDWORTH, LOCKE, BAYLE, Sir ISAAC NEWTON, and Mr. DE FONTENELLE, treat of the moſt profound queſtions in metaphyſics, mathematics, and other parts of philoſophy; they, by handling them as far as their clear diſtinct ideas reached, have written with no leſs perſpicuity to their proper readers, than other authors have done about hiſtorical matters, and upon the plaineſt and moſt common ſubjects.

On the other ſide, when authors, who in other reſpects are equal to the foregoing, treat of any ſubjects further than they have clear and diſtinct ideas; they do and cannot but write to as little

little purpoſe, and take as abſurd pains, as the moſt ignorant authors do, who treat of any ſubject under a total ignorance, or a confuſed knowlege, of it. There are ſo many examples of theſe latter occurring to every reader; and there are ſuch frequent complaints of mens venturing beyond their ability in ſeveral queſtions; that I need not name particular authors, and may fairly avoid the odium of cenſuring any one. But having met with a paſſage concerning the ingenious father MALEBRANCHE in the letters of Mr. BAYLE, who was an able judge, a friend to him, and a defender of him in other reſpects, I hope, I may without being liable to exception produce father MALEBRANCHE as an example. He has in ſeveral books treated of and vindicated the opinion of *ſeeing all things in God*; and yet ſo acute a perſon as Mr. BAYLE, after having read them all, declares, that he *leſs comprehends*

*his notion from his laſt book than ever**. Which plainly ſhows a great defect in F. MALEBRANCHE to write upon a ſubject he underſtood not, and therefore could not make others underſtand.

You ſee, I beſpeak no favour in the queſtion before me, and take the whole fault to myſelf, if I do not write clearly to you on it, and prove what I propoſe.

And that I may inform you, in what I think clear to myſelf, I will begin with explaining the ſenſe of the queſtion.

The queſtion ſtated.

Man is a neceſſary agent, if all his actions are ſo determined by the cauſes preceding each action, that not one paſt action could poſſibly not have come

* *J'ai parcouru le nouveau Livre du Pere Malebranche contre Mr. Arnauld: et j'y ai moins compris que jamais ſa pretention, que les Idées, par leſquelles nous connoiſſons les Objets, ſont en Dieu, et non dans notre Ame. Il y a là du mal-entendu: ce ſont, ce me ſemble, des equivoques perpetuelles.* Letter of the 16th of October 1705, to Mr. Des Maizeaux.

come to paſs, or have been otherwiſe than it hath been; nor one future action can poſſibly not come to paſs, or be otherwiſe than it ſhall be. He is a free agent, if he is able, at any time, under the circumſtances and cauſes he then is, to do different things: or, in other words, if he is not unavoidably determined in every point of time by the circumſtances he is in, and cauſes he is under, to do that one thing he does, and not poſſibly to do any other.

1ſt. Argument wherein our experience is conſidered.

I. This being a queſtion of fact concerning what we ourſelves do; we will, firſt, conſider our own experience; which if we can know, as ſure we may, will certainly determine this matter. And becauſe experience is urged with great triumph, by the patrons of liberty, we will begin with a few general reflections concerning the argument of experience; and then we will proceed to our experience itſelf.

1. The

General reflections on the argument of experience.

1. The vulgar, who are bred up to believe liberty or freedom, think themſelves ſecure of ſucceſs, conſtantly appealing to experience for a proof of their freedom, and being perſuaded that they feel themſelves free on a thouſand occaſions. And the ſource of their miſtake ſeems to be as follows. They either attend not to, or ſee not, the cauſes of their actions, eſpecially in matters of little moment, and thence conclude, they are free, or not moved by cauſes to do what they do.

They alſo frequently do actions whereof they repent: and becauſe in the repenting humour, they find no preſent motive to do thoſe actions, they conclude, that they might not have done them at that time they did them, and that they were free from neceſſity (as they were from outward impediments) in the doing them.

They alſo find, that they can do as they

they will, and forbear as they will, without any external impediment to hinder them from doing as they will; let them will either doing or forbearing. They likewiſe ſee that they often change their minds; that they can, and do chuſe differently every ſucceſſive moment; and that they frequently deliberate, and thereby are ſometimes at a near ballance, and in a ſtate of indifference with reſpect to judging about ſome propoſitions, and willing or chuſing with reſpect to ſome objects. And experiencing theſe things, they miſtake them for the exerciſe of freedom, or liberty from neceſſity. For aſk them, whether they think themſelves free? and they will immediately anſwer, Yes: and ſay ſome one or other of theſe foregoing things, and particularly think they prove themſelves free, when they affirm, they can do as they will.

Nay, celebrated philoſophers and theologers,

theologers, both ancient and modern, who have meditated much on this matter, talk after the ſame manner, giving definitions of liberty, that are conſiſtent with fate or neceſſity; though at the ſame time they would be thought to exempt ſome of the actions of man from the power of fate, or to aſſert liberty from neceſſity. * CICERO defines liberty to be, *a power to do as we will.* And therein ſeveral moderns follow him. One † defines liberty to be, *a power to act or not to act, as we will.* Another defines it in more words thus: ‡ *a power to do what we will, and becauſe we will; ſo that if we did not will it, we ſhould not do it; we ſhould even do the contrary if we willed it.* And another, § *a power to do or forbear an action, according to the determination or thought of the mind, whereby either is preferred to the other.*

On

* Opera *p.* 3968. Ed. Gron. † Placette Eclairciſſ. ſur la liberté, *p.* 2. ‡ Jaquelot ſur l'exiſt. de Dieu. *p.* 381. § Lock's eſſay of human underſt. book II. c. xxi. § 8.

On all which definitions, if the reader will be pleaſed to reflect, he will ſee them to be only definitions of liberty or freedom from outward impediments of action, and not a freedom or liberty from neceſſity; as I alſo will ſhew them to be in the ſequel of this diſcourſe, wherein I ſhall contend equally with them for ſuch a power as they deſcribe, though I affirm, that there is no liberty from neceſſity.

ALEXANDER the Aphrodiſaean, * (a moſt acute philoſopher of the iid century, and the earlieſt commentator now extant upon Ariſtotle, and eſteemed his beſt defender and interpreter) defines liberty to be, *a power to chuſe what to do after deliberation and conſultation, and to chuſe and do what is moſt eligible to our reaſon; whereas otherwiſe we ſhould follow our fancy*†. Now a choice after deliberation is a no

* Fabricii Bibl. Gr. Vol. IV. 63. Voſſius de Sect. Phil. c. 18. † De fato, p. m. 57.

no leſs neceſſary choice, than a choice by fancy. For though a choice by fancy, or without deliberation, may be one way, and a choice with deliberation may be another way, or different; yet each choice being founded on what is judged beſt, the one for one reaſon, and the other for another, is equally neceſſary; and good or bad reaſons, haſty or deliberate thoughts, fancy or deliberation, make no difference.

In the ſame manner, † biſhop BRAMHALL, who has written ſeveral books for liberty, and pretends to aſſert the liberty taught by ARISTOTLE, defines liberty thus: he ſays, *That act which makes a man's actions to be truly free, is election; which is the deliberate chuſing or refuſing of this or that means, or the acceptation of one means before another, where divers are repreſented by the underſtanding.* And that

† Bp. Bramhall's works, p. 735.

that this definition places liberty wholly in chuſing the ſeeming beſt means, and not in chuſing the ſeeming worſt means, equally with the beſt, * will appear from the following paſſages. He ſays, † *actions, done in ſudden and violent paſſions, are not free; becauſe there is no deliberation nor election.—To ſay the will is determined by motives,* that is, *by reaſons or diſcourſes, is as much as to ſay that the agent is determined by himſelf,* or is free. *Becauſe motives determine not naturally, but morally; which kind of determination is conſiſtent with true liberty—Admitting that the will follows neceſſarily the laſt dictate of the underſtanding, this is not deſtructive of the liberty of the will; this is only an hypothetical neceſſity.* So that liberty, with him, conſiſts in chuſing, or refuſing, neceſſarily after deliberation; which chuſing or refuſing is morally and hypothetically determined, or neceſſary,

* p. 697. † p. 702.

ceſſary, by virtue of the ſaid deliberation.

Laſtly, A great Arminian theologer, who has writ a courſe of philoſophy, and entered into ſeveral controverſies on the ſubject of liberty, makes liberty to conſiſt in * *an indifferency of mind while a thing is under deliberation. For*, ſays he, *while the mind deliberates, it is free till the moment of action; becauſe nothing determines it neceſſarily to act, or not to act.* Whereas, when the mind has a thing under deliberation, that is, when the mind balances or compares ideas or motives together, it is then no leſs neceſſarily determined to a ſtate of indifferency by the appearances of thoſe ideas and motives, that it is neceſſarily determined in the very moment of action. Were a man to be at liberty in this ſtate of indifferency, he ought to have it in his power to be not indifferent at the ſame time that he is indifferent. If

* Le Clerc Bibl. Choiſ. Tom. xii. p. 103, 104.

If experience therefore proves the liberty contended for by the foregoing aſſerters of liberty, it proves men to have no liberty from neceſſity.

2. As the foregoing aſſerters of liberty give us definitions of liberty, as grounded on experience, which are conſiſtent with neceſſity; ſo ſome of the greateſt patrons of liberty do by their conceſſions in this matter ſufficiently deſtroy all argument from experience.

ERASMUS, in his treatiſe for free-will, againſt LUTHER, ſays, * *That among the difficulties which have exerciſed the theologers and philoſophers of all ages, there is none greater than the queſtion of free-will.* And Mr. LE CLERC, ſpeaking of this book of ERASMUS, ſays, † *that the queſtion of free-will was too ſubtile for* ERASMUS, *who*

* Opera, Tom. 9. p. 1215. † Bibl. Choiſ. Tom. xii. p. 51.

who was no philoſopher; which makes him often contradict himſelf.

The late biſhop of Sarum ‡, though he contends, *Every man experiences liberty** ; yet owns, that great difficulties attend the ſubject on all hands, and that therefore he pretends not to explain or anſwer them.

The famous BERNARD OCHIN, a great Italian wit, has written a moſt ſubtile and ingenious book, intituled, Labyrinths concerning free-will and predeſtination †, etc. wherein he ſhews, that they, who aſſert that man acts freely, are involved in four great difficulties; and that thoſe, who aſſert that man acts neceſſarily, fall into four other difficulties. So that he forms eight labyrinths, four againſt liberty, and four, againſt neceſſity. He turns himſelf all manner of ways to get clear of them; but not being able to find any ſolution, he conſtantly concludes with

‡ Expoſit. p. 117. * Pag. 27. † Printed at Baſil.

with a prayer to God to deliver him from theſe abyſſes. Indeed in the progreſs of his work, he endeavours to furniſh means to get out of this priſon: but he concludes, that the only way is to ſay with SOCRATES, *Hoc unum ſcio quod nihil ſcio. We ought*, ſays he, *to reſt contented, and conclude, that God requires neither the affirmative nor negative of us.* This is the title of his laſt chapter, *Qua via ex omnibus ſupradictis labyrinthis cito exiri poſſit, quae doctae ignorantiae via vocatur.*

A famous author*, who appeals to common experience, for a proof of liberty, confeſſes, that *the queſtion of liberty is the moſt obſcure and difficult queſtion in all philoſophy: that the learned are fuller of contradictions to themſelves, and to one another, on this, than on any other ſubject*†: And that he writes *againſt the common notion of liberty*‡, and endeavours to eſtabliſh *another*

* King de Orig. Mali. p. 91, 117. † Pag. 99. ‡ Pag. 105.

another notion, which he allows to be intricate.*

But how can all this happen in a plain matter of fact, ſuppoſed to be experienced by every body? What difficulty can there be in ſtating a plain matter of fact, and deſcribing what every body feels? What need of ſo much philoſophy? And why ſo many contradictions on the ſubject? And how can all men experience liberty, when it is allowed, that the common notion of liberty is falſe, or not experienced; and a new notion of liberty, not thought on before, or thought on but by few, is ſet up as matter of experience? This could not happen, if matter of fact was clear for liberty.

3. Other aſſerters of liberty ſeem driven into it on account of ſuppoſed inconveniences attending the doctrine of neceſſity. The great EPISCOPIUS, in his treatiſe of free-will, acknowleges

* Pag 117.

leges in effect, that the aſſerters of neceſſity have ſeeming experience on their ſide, and are thereby very numerous; * *They*, as he obſerves, *allege one thing of moment, in which they triumph, viz.* " that the will is de-
" termined by the underſtanding: and
" aſſert, that unleſs it were ſo, the
" will would be a blind faculty, and
" might make evil, as evil, its object;
" and reject what is pleaſant and a-
" greeable: and by conſequence, that
" all perſuaſions, promiſes, reaſonings
" and threats, would be as uſeleſs to a
" man as to a ſtock or a ſtone." *This*, he allows to be very plauſible, and to *have the appearance of probability*; *to be the common ſentiment of the ſchools*; *to be the rock on which the ableſt defenders of liberty have ſplit, without being able to anſwer it*; and to be the reaſon or argument (or rather the matter of experience) *which has made men in all*

* Opera Vol. I. p. 198, 199, 200.

all ages, and not a few in this age, fall into the opinion of the fatal neceſſity of all things. But becauſe it makes all our actions neceſſary, and thereby, in his opinion, *ſubverts all religion, laws, rewards and puniſhments*; he concludes it *to be moſt certainly falſe: and religion makes him quit this common and plauſible opinion.* Thus alſo many other ſtrenuous aſſerters of liberty, as well as himſelf, are driven by theſe ſuppoſed difficulties, to deny manifeſt experience. I ſay, manifeſt experience; for are we not manifeſtly determined by pleaſure or pain, and by what ſeems reaſonable or unreaſonable to us, to judge, or will, or act? Whereas, could they ſee that there are no grounds for laws and morality, rewards and puniſhments, but by ſuppoſing the doctrine of neceſſity; and that there is no foundation for laws and morality, rewards and puniſhments, upon the ſuppoſition of man's being a free agent,

gent, (as ſhall evidently, and demonſtratively appear) they would readily allow experience to be againſt free-will, and deny liberty, when they ſhould ſee there was no need to aſſert it, in order to maintain thoſe neceſſary things. And as a farther evidence thereof, let any man peruſe the diſcourſes written by the ableſt authors for liberty, and he will ſee, as they confeſs of one another, that they frequently contradict themſelves, write obſcurely, and know not where to place liberty; at leaſt, he will ſee that he is able to make nothing of their diſcourſes; no more than Mr. LOCKE * was of this treatiſe of EPISCOPIUS, who, in all his other writings, ſhews himſelf to be a clear, ſtrong and argumentative writer.

4. There are others, and thoſe contenders for liberty, as well as denyers of it, who report the perſuaſions of men, as to the matter of fact, very

* Letters. p. 521.

differently, and alſo judge very differently themſelves about the fact, from what is vulgarly believed among thoſe who maintain free-will.

An ancient author ſpeaks thus*: *Fate*, ſays he, *is ſufficiently proved from the general received opinion and perſuaſion of men thereof. For, in certain things, when men all agree, except a few, who diſſent from them on account of maintaining ſome doctrines before taken up, they cannot be miſtaken. Wherefore* ANAXAGORAS *the Clazomenian, though no contemptible naturaliſt, ought not to be judged to deſerve any regard, when oppoſing the common perſuaſion of all men he aſſerts*, "That nothing is "done by fate: but that it is an emp- "ty name." And according to all authors, recording the opinions of men in this matter, the belief of fate, as to all events, has continued to be the moſt common perſuaſion both of philoſophers

* Alexander de fato. p. 10.

loſophers and people; as it is at this day the perſuaſion of much the greateſt part of mankind, according to the relations of voyagers. And though it has not equally prevailed among Chriſtians, as it has and does among all other religious parties; yet it is certain, the Fataliſts have been, and are, very numerous among Chriſtians: and the free-will-theologers themſelves allow, * *That ſome Chriſtians are as great Fataliſts, as any of the ancient philoſophers were.*

The acute and penetrating Mr. BAYLE reports the fact, as very differently underſtood by thoſe who have thoroughly examined and conſidered the various actions of man, from what is vulgarly ſuppoſed in this matter. Says he, † *They, who examine not to the bottom what paſſes within them, eaſily perſuade themſelves, that they are free:*

* Reeves's Apol. vol. 1. p. 150. Sherlock of Prov. p. 66.

† Dictionaire, p. 1497. 2d. edit.

but they, who have conſidered with care the foundation and circumſtances of their actions, doubt of their freedom, and are even perſuaded, that their reaſon and underſtandings are ſlaves that cannot reſiſt the force which carries them along. He ſays alſo, in a familiar letter, *That the beſt proofs alleged for liberty are, that without it man could not ſin; and that God would be the author of evil, as well as good, thoughts*.*

And the celebrated Mr. LEIBNITZ, that univerſal genius, on occaſion of archbiſhop KING's appeal to experience, (in behalf of his notion of liberty, viz. † *A faculty, which, being indifferent to objects, and over-ruling our paſſions, appetites, ſenſations, and reaſon, chuſes arbitrarily among objects; and renders the object choſen agreeable, only becauſe it has choſen it*) denies, that we experience ſuch, or any other liberty;

* Letter of the 13 of December, 1696, to the abbot Du Bos.

† De Orig. mali. c. 5.

berty; but contends that we rather experience a determination in all our actions. Says he, ‡ *We experience ſomething in us which inclines us to a choice; and if it happens that we cannot give a reaſon of all our inclinations, a little attention will ſhow us, that the conſtitution of our bodies, the bodies encompaſſing us, the preſent, or preceding ſtate of our minds, and ſeveral little matters comprehended under theſe great cauſes, may contribute to make us chuſe certain objects, without having recourſe to a pure indifference, or to I know not what power of the ſoul, which does upon objects, what they ſay colours do upon the Camelion.* In fine, he is ſo far from thinking that there is the leaſt foundation from experience, for the ſaid notion of liberty, that he treats it as a chimera, and compares it *to the magical power of the fairies to transform things**.

‡ Remarques ſur le liv. de l' Orig. du mal, p. 76. * Pag. 84.

Laſtly, The journaliſts of Paris are very far from thinking archbiſhop KING's notion of liberty to be matter of experience, when they ſay, *That Dr.* KING, *not ſatisfied with any of the former notions of liberty, propoſes a new notion; and carries indifference ſo far, as to maintain that pleaſure is not the motive but the effect of the choice of the will*; placet res quia eligitur, non eligitur quia placet. *This opinion*, add they, *makes him frequently contradict himſelf* *.

So that upon the whole, the affair of experience, with relation to liberty, ſtands thus. Some give the name liberty to actions, which when deſcribed, are plainly actions that are neceſſary; others, though appealing to vulgar experience, yet inconſiſtently therewith, contradict the vulgar experience, by owning it to be an intricate matter, and treating it after an intricate manner;

* Journal des Savans of the 16 of March, 1505.

ner, others are driven into the defence of liberty, by difficulties imagined to flow from the doctrine of neceſſity, combating what they allow to be matter of ſeeming experience; others, and thoſe the moſt diſcerning, either think liberty cannot be proved by experience, or think men may ſee by experience, that they are neceſſary agents; and the bulk of mankind have always been perſuaded that they are neceſſary agents.

Our experience itſelf conſidered.

Having thus paved the way, by ſhewing that liberty is not a plain matter of experience, by arguments drawn from the aſſerters of liberty themſelves, and by conſequence ſubverted the argument from experience for liberty; we will now run over the various actions of men which can be conceived to concern this ſubject, and examine, whether we can know from experience, that man is a free or a neceſſary agent. I think thoſe actions may be reduced to theſe four:

1. Perception of ideas. 2. Judging of propoſitions. 3. Willing. 4. Doing as we will.

Perception of ideas.

1. Perception of ideas. Of this there can be no diſpute but it is a neceſſary action of man, ſince it is not even a voluntary action. The ideas both of ſenſation and reflection offer themſelves to us whether we will or no, and we cannot reject them. We muſt be conſcious that we think, when we do think; and thereby we neceſſarily have the ideas of reflection. We muſt alſo uſe our ſenſes when awake; and thereby neceſſarily receive the ideas of ſenſation. And as we neceſſarily receive ideas, ſo each idea is neceſſarily what it is in our mind: for it is not poſſible to make any thing different from itſelf. This firſt neceſſary action, the reader will ſee, is the foundation and cauſe of all the other intelligent actions of man, and makes them alſo neceſſary. For, as a judicious author and nice

nice obſerver of the inward actions of man, ſays truly, * *Temples have their ſacred images, and we ſee what influence they have always had over a great part of mankind. But in truth, the ideas and images in mens minds are the inviſible powers that conſtantly govern them, and to theſe, they univerſally pay a ready ſubmiſſion.*

2. The ſecond action of man is *judging of propoſitions.* All propoſitions muſt appear to me either ſelf-evident, or evident from proof, or probable, or improbable, or doubtful, or falſe. Now theſe various appearances of propoſitions to me, being founded on my capacity, and the degree of light propoſitions ſtand in to me; I can no more change thoſe appearances in me, than I can change the idea of red raiſed in me. Nor can I judge contrary to thoſe appearances: for what

Judging of propoſitions.

* Locke's poſth. Works, p. 1, 2.

is judging of propoſitions, but judging that propoſitions do appear as they do appear? which I cannot avoid doing, without lying to myſelf; which is impoſſible. If any man thinks he can judge a propoſition, appearing to him evident, to be not evident; or a probable propoſition, to be more or leſs probable than it appears by the proofs to be; he knows not what he ſays, as he may ſee, if he will define his words. The neceſſity of being determined by appearances was maintained by all the old philoſophers, even by the Academics or Sceptics. CICERO ſays, * *You muſt take from a man his ſenſes, if you take from him the power of aſſenting; for it is as neceſſary the mind ſhould yield to what is clear, as that a ſcale hanging on a Balance ſhould ſink with weight laid on it. For as all living creatures cannot but deſire what is agreeable to their natures, ſo they cannot but aſſent to*

* Academ. Queſt. lib. 2.

to what is clear. Wherefore, if thoſe things whereof we diſpute are true; it is to no purpoſe to ſpeak of aſſent: For he who apprehends or perceives any thing, aſſents immediately. Again, *aſſent not only precedes the practice of vice, but of virtue, the ſteady performance whereof, and adherence to which, depend on what a man has aſſented to and approved. And it is neceſſary, that ſomething ſhould appear to us before we act, and that we ſhould aſſent to that appearance. Wherefore he who takes away appearances and aſſent from man deſtroys all action in him.* The force of this reaſoning manifeſtly extends to all the various judgments men make upon the appearances of things. And CICERO, as an Academic or Sceptic, muſt be ſuppoſed to extend neceſſity to every kind of judgment or aſſent of man upon the appearances (or as the Greeks call them φαινομένα, and himſelf the viſa)

of

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of

of things. SIXTUS EMPIRICUS ſays,* *they, who ſay, the Sceptics take away appearances, have not converſed with them, and do not underſtand them. For we deſtroy not the paſſions to which our ſenſes find themſelves expoſed whether we will or no, and which force us to ſubmit to appearances. For when it is aſked us,* whether objects are ſuch as they appear? *we deny not their appearances, nor doubt of them, but only queſtion, whether the external objects are like the appearances.*

Willing.

3. Willing, is the third action of man, which I propoſe to conſider. It is matter of daily experience, that we begin, or forbear, continue or end, ſeveral actions barely by a thought or preference of the mind, ordering the doing or not doing, the continuing or ending, ſuch or ſuch actions. Thus before we think or deliberate on any ſubject, or before we get on horſeback,

* Pyrrhon. Hypot. l. 2. c. 10.

back, we do prefer thoſe things to any thing elſe in competition with them. In like manner, if we forbear theſe actions, when any of them are offered to our thoughts; or if we continue to proceed in any one of theſe actions once begun; or if at any time we make an end of proſecuting them; we do forbear, or continue, or end them on our preference of the forbearance to the doing of them, of the continuing them to the ending them, and of the ending to the continuing them. This power of the man thus to order the beginning or forbearance, the continuance or ending of any action, is called *the will*, and the actual exerciſe thereof, *willing*.

There are two queſtions uſually put about this matter: firſt, Whether we are at liberty to will or not to will? ſecondly, Whether we are at liberty to will

will one or the other of two or more objects?

1. As to the firſt, *whether we are at liberty to will, or not to will?* it is manifeſt, we have not that liberty. For let an action in a man's power be propoſed to him as preſently to be done, as for example, to walk; the will to walk, or not to walk, exiſts immediately. And when an action in a man's power is propoſed to him to be done to-morrow, as to walk to morrow; he is no leſs obliged to have ſome immediate will. He muſt either have a will to defer willing about the matter propoſed, or muſt will immediately in relation to the thing propoſed: and one or the other of thoſe wills muſt exiſt immediately, no leſs than the will to walk, or not to walk, in the former caſe. Wherefore in every propoſal of ſomething to be done which is in a man's power to do, he cannot but have ſome immediate will.

Hence

Hence appears the miſtake of thoſe who think men at *liberty to will, or not to will, becauſe*, ſay they, *they can ſuſpend willing**, in relation to actions to be done to-morrow; wherein they plainly confound themſelves with words. For when it is ſaid, man is neceſſarily determined to will; it is not thereby underſtood, that he is determined to will or chuſe one out of two objects immediately in every caſe propoſed to him (or to chuſe at all in ſome caſes; as whether he will travel into France or Holland,) but that on every propoſal he muſt neceſſarily have ſome will. And he is not leſs determined to will, becauſe he does often ſuſpend willing or chuſing in certain caſes: for ſuſpending to will, is itſelf an act of willing; it is willing to defer willing about the matter propoſed. In fine, though great ſtreſs is laid on the caſe of ſuſpending the will, to prove liberty,

* Locke of Hum. Und. l. 2. c. 21.

liberty, yet there is no difference between that and the moſt common caſes of willing and chuſing upon the manifeſt excellency of one object before another. For as when a man wills or chuſes living in England before going out of it (in which will he is manifeſtly determined by the ſatisfaction he has in living in England) he rejects the will to go out of England; ſo a man, who ſuſpends a will about any matter, wills doing nothing in it at preſent, or rejects for a time willing about it; which circumſtances of wholly rejecting, and rejecting for a time, make no variation that affects the queſtion. So that willing or chuſing ſuſpenſion, is like all other choices or wills we have.

2. Secondly, let us now ſee, *whether we are at liberty to will or chuſe one or the other of two or more objects.* Now as to this, we will, firſt, conſider, whether we are at liberty to will one

of

of two or more objects wherein we diſcern any difference: that is, where one upon the whole ſeems more excellent than another: or where one upon the whole ſeems leſs hurtful than another. And this will not admit of much diſpute, if we conſider what willing is. Willing or preferring, is the ſame with reſpect to good and evil, that judging is with reſpect to truth or falſhood. It is judging, that one thing is upon the whole better than another, or not ſo bad as another. Wherefore as we judge of truth or falſhood according to appearances; ſo we muſt will or prefer as things ſeem to us, unleſs we can lye to ourſelves, and think that to be worſt which we think beſt.

An ingenious author expreſſes this matter well, when he ſays, * "*the* "*queſtion*, whether a man be at liberty "to will which of the two he pleaſ-

"es,

* Locke's eſſay of Human Und. l. 2. c. 21. ſect. 25.

" es, motion or reſt, *carries the abſur-*
" *dity of it ſo manifeſtly in itſelf, that*
" *one might hereby be ſufficiently convin-*
" *ced, that liberty concerns not the will.*
" *For to aſk*, whether a man be at
" liberty to will either motion orreſt,
" ſpeaking or ſilence, which he pleaſ-
" es? *is to aſk, whether a man can*
" *will what he wills, or be pleaſed with*
" *what he is pleaſed with? A queſtion*
" *that needs no anſwer.*"

To ſuppoſe a ſenſible being capable of willing or preferring, call it as you pleaſe, miſery, and refuſing good, is to deny it to be really ſenſible; for every man while he has his ſenſes, aims at pleaſure and happineſs, and avoids pain and miſery; and this, in willing actions, which are ſuppoſed to be attended with the moſt terrible conſequences. And therefore the ingenious Mr. NORRIS * very juſtly obſerves, that *all who commit ſin, think it,*

* Theory of Love, p. 199.

it, at the inſtant of commiſſion, all things conſidered, a leſſer evil; otherwiſe it is impoſſible they ſhould commit it: and he inſtances in St. PETER's denial of his maſter, *who,* he ſays, *judged that part moſt eligible which he choſe; that is, he judged the ſin of denying his maſter at that preſent juncture, to be leſs evil than the danger of not denying him, and ſo choſe it. Otherwiſe, if he had then actually thought it a greater evil, all that whereby it exceeded the other, he would have choſen* gratis, *and conſequently have willed evil as evil,* which is impoſſible. And another acute philoſopher obſerves, * that *there are in France many new converts, who go to maſs with great reluctance. They know they mortally offend God, but as each offence would coſt them,* ſuppoſe, *two piſtoles, and having reckoned the charge, and finding that this fine paid as often as there are feſtivals and ſundays, would re-*

* Bayle Reponſe aux Queſt. etc. vol. 3. p. 756.

reduce them and their families to beg their bread, they conclude it better to offend God, than beg.

In fine, though there is hardly any thing ſo abſurd, but ſome ancient philoſopher or other may be cited for it; yet according to PLATO †, *none of them were ſo abſurd to ſay that men did evil voluntarily*; and he aſſerts, that *it is contrary to the nature of man, to follow evil, as evil, and not purſue good*; and that *when a man is compelled to chuſe between two evils, you will never find a man who chuſes the greateſt, if it is in his power to chuſe the leſs*; and that *this is a truth manifeſt to all.* And even the greateſt modern advocates for liberty allow, that *whatever the will chuſeth, it chuſeth under the notion of good*; and that *the object of the will is good in general, which is the end of all human actions.*

This I take to be ſufficient to ſhew, that

† Opera Edit. Serran. vol. 1. p. 345, 346. * Bramhall's Works, p. 656, and 658.

that man is not at liberty to will one or the other of two or more objects, between which, all things conſidered, he perceives a difference; and to account truly for all the choices of that kind, which can be aſſigned.

But ſecondly, ſome of the patrons of liberty contend, that we are free in our choice among things indifferent, or alike, as in chuſing one out of two or more eggs; and that in ſuch caſes, the man, having no motive from the objects, is not neceſſitated to chuſe one rather than the other, becauſe there is no perceivable difference between them, but chuſes one by a mere act of willing, without any cauſe but his own free act. To which I anſwer, 1. Firſt, by aſking whether this and other inſtances like this are the only inſtances wherein man is free to will or chuſe among objects? If they are the only inſtances wherein man is free to will or chuſe among objects, then

then we are advanced a great way in the queſtion; becauſe there are few, if any, objects of the will that are perfectly alike; and becauſe neceſſity is hereby allowed to take place in all caſes where there is a perceivable difference in things, and conſequently in all moral and religious caſes, for the ſake whereof ſuch endeavours have been uſed to maintain ſo abſurd and inconſiſtent a thing as liberty or freedom from neceſſity. So that liberty is almoſt, if not quite, reduced to nothing, and deſtroyed as to the grand end in aſſerting it. If thoſe are not the only inſtances wherein man is free to will or chuſe among objects, but man is free to will in other caſes, theſe other caſes ſhould be aſſigned, and not ſuch caſes as are of no conſequence, and which by the great likeneſs of the objects to one another, and for other reaſons, make the cauſe of the determination of man's will leſs eaſy to be known,

and

and conſequently ſerve to no other purpoſe but to darken the queſtion, which may be better determined by conſidering, whether man be free to will or no in more important inſtances. 2. Secondly, I anſwer, that whenever a choice is made, there can be no equality of circumſtances preceding the choice. For in the caſe of chuſing one out of two or more eggs, between which there is no perceivable difference; there is not, nor can there be, a true equality of circumſtances and cauſes preceding the act of chuſing one of the ſaid eggs. It is not enough to render things equal to the will, that they are equal or alike in themſelves. All the various modifications of the man, his opinions, prejudices, temper, habit, and circumſtances, are to be taken in, and conſidered as cauſes of election, no leſs than the objects without us among which we chuſe; and theſe will ever incline or determine

our

our wills, and make the choice we do make, preferable to us, though the external objects of our choice are ever ſo much alike to each other. And, for example, in the caſe of chuſing one out of two eggs that are alike, there is, firſt, in the perſon chuſing a will to eat or uſe an egg. There is, ſecondly, a will to take but one, or one firſt. Thirdly, conſequent to theſe two wills, follow in the ſame inſtant chuſing and taking one; which one is choſen and taken moſt commonly, according as the parts of our bodies have been formed long ſince by our wills, or by other cauſes, to an habitual practice, or as thoſe parts are determined by ſome particular circumſtances at that time. And we may know, by reflection on our actions, that ſeveral of our choices have been determined to one among ſeveral objects by theſe laſt means, when no cauſe has ariſen from the mere conſideration

deration of the objects themſelves. For we know by experience, that we either uſe all the parts of our bodies by habit, or according to ſome particular cauſe determining their uſe at that time. Fourthly, there are in all trains of cauſes, that precede their effects, and eſpecially effects which nearly reſemble each other, certain differences undiſcernable on account of their minuteneſs, and alſo on account of our not accuſtoming ourſelves to attend to them, which yet in concurrence with other cauſes as neceſſarily produce their effect, as the laſt feather laid on breaks the horſe's back, and as a grain neceſſarily turns the balance between any weights, though the eye cannot diſcover which is the greateſt weight or bulk by ſo ſmall a difference. And I add, that as we know without ſuch diſcovery by the eye, that if one ſcale riſes and the other falls, there is a greater weight in one ſcale than the

other, and alſo know that the leaſt additional weight is ſufficient to determine the ſcales; ſo likewiſe we may know that the leaſt circumſtance in the extenſive chain of cauſes, that precede every effect, is ſufficient to produce an effect; and alſo know, that there muſt be cauſes of our choice (though we do not or cannot diſcern thoſe cauſes) by knowing, *that every thing that has a beginning muſt have a cauſe.* By which laſt principle we are as neceſſarily led to conceive a cauſe of action in man, where we ſee not the particular cauſe itſelf; as we are to conceive that a greater weight determines a ſcale, though our eyes diſcover no difference between the two weights.

But let us put a caſe of true equality or indifference, and what I have aſſerted will more manifeſtly appear true. Let two eggs appear perfectly alike to a man; and let him have no will

will to eat or uſe eggs. (For ſo the caſe ought to be put, to render things perfectly indifferent to him; becauſe, if once a will to eat eggs be ſuppoſed, that will muſt neceſſarily introduce a train of cauſes, which will ever deſtroy an equality of circumſtances in relation to the things which are the objects of our choice. There will ſoon follow a ſecond will to eat one firſt. And theſe two wills muſt put the man upon action, and the uſage of the parts of his body, to obtain his end; which parts are determined in their motions, either by ſome habitual practice, or by ſome particular circumſtance at that time, and cauſe the man to chuſe and take one of them firſt rather than the other.) The caſe of equality being thus rightly ſtated, I ſay, it is manifeſt, no choice would or could be made; and the man is viſibly prevented in the beginning from making a choice. For every man experiences, that be-

fore he can make a choice among eggs, he muſt have a will to eat or uſe an egg; otherwiſe he muſt let them alone. And he alſo experiences, in relation to all things which are the objects of his choice, that he muſt have a precedent will to chuſe; otherwiſe he will make no choice. No man marries one woman preferable to another, or travels into France rather than into another country, or writes a book on one ſubject rather than another, but he muſt firſt have a precedent will to marry, travel, and write.

It is therefore contrary to experience, to ſuppoſe any choice can be made under an equality of circumſtances. And by conſequence it is matter of experience, that man is ever determined in his willing or acts of volition and choice.

Doing as we will.

4. Fourthly, I ſhall now conſider the actions of men conſequent to *willing*, and ſee whether he be free in any of thoſe actions. And here alſo we experi-

experience perfect neceſſity. If we will thinking or deliberating on a ſubject, or will reading, or walking, or riding, we find we muſt do thoſe actions, unleſs ſome external impediment, as an apoplexy, or ſome intervening cauſe, hinders us; and then we are as much neceſſitated to let an action alone, as we were to act according to our will, had no ſuch external impediment to action happened. If alſo we change our wills after we have begun any of theſe actions, we find we neceſſarily leave off theſe actions, and follow the *new will* or choice. And this was ARISTOTLE's ſenſe of ſuch actions of man. *As*, ſays he, † *in arguing we neceſſarily aſſent to the inference or concluſion drawn from premiſes, ſo if that arguing relate to practice, we neceſſarily act upon ſuch inference or concluſion. As for example, when we argue thus*, whatever is ſweet is to be taſted, this is ſweet,

† Ethica, l. 7. c. 5. ap. Opera, Edit. Par. Vol. II. p. 88, etc.

he who infers, therefore this ought to be taſted, *neceſſarily taſtes that ſweet thing, if there be no obſtacle to hinder him.*

For a concluſion of this argument from experience, let us compare the actions of inferior intelligent and ſenſible agents, and thoſe of men together. It is allowed that beaſts are neceſſary agents, and yet there is no perceivable difference between their actions and the actions of men, from whence they ſhould be deemed neceſſary and men free agents. Sheep, for example, are ſuppoſed to be neceſſary agents, when they ſtand ſtill, lie down, go ſlow or faſt, turn to the right or left, ſkip, as they are differently affected in their minds; when they are doubtful or deliberate which way to take; when they eat and drink out of hunger and thirſt; when they eat or drink more or leſs according to their humour, or as they like the water or the paſture; when they

they chuſe the ſweeteſt and beſt paſture; when they chuſe among paſtures that are indifferent or alike; when they copulate; when they are fickle or ſtedfaſt in their amours; when they take more or leſs care of their young; when they act in virtue of vain fears; when they apprehend danger and fly from it, and ſometimes defend themſelves; when they quarrel among themſelves about love or other matters, and terminate thoſe quarrels by fighting; when they follow thoſe leaders among themſelves that preſume to go firſt; and when they are either obedient to the ſhepherd and his dog, or refractory. And why ſhould man be deemed free in the performance of the ſame or the like actions? He has indeed more knowlege than ſheep. He takes in more things, as matter of pleaſure, than they do; being ſometimes moved with notions of honour and virtue, as well as with thoſe pleaſures he has in common

with them. He is alſo more moved by abſent things, and things future, than they are. He is alſo ſubject to more vain fears, more miſtakes and wrong actions, and infinitely more abſurdities in notions. He has alſo more power and ſtrength, as well as more art and cunning, and is capable of doing more good and more miſchief to his fellow-men than they are to one another. But theſe larger powers and larger weakneſſes, which are of the ſame kind with the powers and weakneſſes of ſheep, cannot contain liberty in them, and plainly make no perceivable difference between them and men, as to the general cauſes of action, in finite intelligent and ſenſible beings; no more than the different degrees of theſe powers and weakneſſes, among the various kinds of beaſts, birds, fiſhes, and reptiles do among them. Wherefore I need not run through the actions of foxes, or any of the more ſubtile animals,

mals, nor the actions of children, which are allowed by the advocates of *liberty** to be all neceſſary. I ſhall only aſk theſe queſtions concerning the laſt. To what age do children continue neceſſary agents, and when do they become free? What different experience have they when they are ſuppoſed to be free agents, from what they had while neceſſary agents? And what different actions do they do, from whence it appears, that they are neceſſary agents to a certain age, and free agents afterwards?

2d Argument, taken from the impoſſibility of liberty.

II. A ſecond reaſon to prove man a neceſſary agent is, becauſe all his actions have a beginning. For whatever has a beginning muſt have a cauſe; and every cauſe is a neceſſary cauſe.

If any thing can have a beginning which has no cauſe, then nothing can produce ſomething. And if nothing can produce ſomething, then the world

* Bramhall's Works, p. 656, 662.

might have had a beginning without a cauſe: which is not only an abſurdity commonly charged on Atheiſts, but is a real abſurdity in itſelf.

Beſides, if a cauſe be not a neceſſary cauſe, it is no cauſe at all. For if cauſes are not neceſſary cauſes; then cauſes are not ſuited to, or are indifferent to effects; and the Epicurean ſyſtem of chance is rendered poſſible; and this orderly world might have been produced by a diſorderly or fortuitous concourſe of atoms; or which is all one, by no cauſe at all. For in arguing againſt the Epicurean ſyſtem of chance, do we not ſay, and that juſtly, that it is impoſſible for chance ever to have produced an orderly ſyſtem of things, as not being a cauſe ſuited to the effect; and that an orderly ſyſtem of things, which had a beginning, muſt have had an intelligent agent for its cauſe, as being the only proper cauſe to that effect? All which implies, that

cauſes

cauſes are ſuited or have relation to ſome particular effects, and not to others. And if they be ſuited to ſome particular effect and not to others, they can be no cauſes at all to thoſe others. And therefore a cauſe not ſuited to the effect, and no cauſe, are the ſame thing. And if a cauſe not ſuited to the effect, is no cauſe; then a cauſe ſuited to the effect is a neceſſary cauſe: for if it does not produce the effect, it is not ſuited to it, or is no cauſe at all of it.

Liberty therefore, or a power to act or not to act, to do this or another thing under the ſame cauſes, is an impoſſibility and atheiſtical.

And as liberty ſtands, and can only be grounded on the abſurd principles of Epicurean atheiſm; ſo the Epicurean Athieſts, who were the moſt popular and moſt numerous ſect of the Atheiſts of antiquity, were the great * aſſerters of liberty; as on the other ſide, the

* Lucretius, l. 2. v. 250, etc. Euſ. Prep. Ev. l. 6. c. 7.

the † Stoics, who were the moſt popular and moſt numerous ſect among the religionaries of antiquity, were the great aſſerters of fate and neceſſity. The caſe was alſo the ſame among the Jews, as among the Heathen: the Jews, I ſay, who, beſides the light of nature, had many books of revelation, ſome whereof are now loſt; and who had intimate and perſonal converſation with God himſelf. They were principally divided into three ſects, the Sadducees, the Phariſees, and the Eſſenes. The Sadducees, who were eſteemed an irreligious and atheiſtical ſect, maintained *the liberty of man**. But the Phariſees, who were a religious ſect, *aſcribed all things to fate* or to *God's appointment*, and it was *the firſt article of their creed, that fate and God do all*†; and conſequently they could not aſſert a true liberty, when they aſſerted a liberty together with this fatality and

† Cicero de Nat. Deor. l. 1. * Joſephus, Antiq. l. 18 c. 2. † De bello Jud. l. 2. c. 7.

and neceſſity of all things. And the Eſſenes, who were the moſt religious ſect among the Jews, and fell not under the cenſure of our Saviour for their hypocriſy as the Phariſees did, were aſſerters of abſolute fate and neceſſity. St. PAUL, * who was a Phariſee *and the ſon of a Phariſee*, is ſuppoſed by the learned DODWELL, † *to have received his doctrine of fate from the maſters of that ſect, as they received it from the Stoics.* And he obſerves further, that *the Stoic philoſophy is neceſſary for the explication of Chriſtian theology*; that *there are examples in the holy ſcriptures of the holy Ghoſt's ſpeaking according to the opinions of the Stoics*; and that in particular, the apoſtle St. PAUL, *in what he has diſputed concerning predeſtination and reprobation, is to be expounded according to the Stoics opinion concerning fate.* So that liberty is both the real foundation of popular Atheiſm, and has been the profeſſed principle of the

* Acts 23. 6. † Proleg. ad Stearn. de Obſtin. ſect. 40, et 41.

the Atheiſts themſelves; as on the other ſide, fate or the neceſſity of events, has been eſteemed a religious opinion and been the profeſſed principle of the religious, both among Heathens and Jews, and alſo of that great convert to Chriſtianity, and great converter of others, St. PAUL.

3d Argument, taken from the imperfection of liberty.

III. Thirdly, liberty is contended for by the patrons thereof as a great perfection. In order therefore to diſprove all pretences for it, I will now ſhow, that according to all the various deſcriptions given of it by theologers and philoſophers, it would often be an imperfection, but never a perfection, as I have in the laſt article ſhowed it to be impoſſible and atheiſtical.

1. If liberty be defined, *a power to paſs different judgments* * at the ſame inſtant of time, *upon the ſame individual propoſitions that are not evident* (we being, as it is owned, *neceſſarily determined*

* Le Clerc Bibl. Choiſ. Tom. xii. p. 88, 89.

ed to paſs but *one judgment on evident propoſitions)* it will follow, that men will be ſo far irrational, and by conſequence imperfect agents, as they have that freedom of judgment. For, ſince they would be irrational agents, if they were capable of judging evident propoſitions not to be evident; they muſt be alſo deemed irrational agents, if they are capable of judging the ſelf-ſame probable or improbable propoſitions not to be probable or improbable. The appearances of all propoſitions to us, whether evident, probable, or improbable, are the ſole rational grounds of our judgments in relation to them: and the appearances of probable, or improbable propoſitions, are no leſs neceſſary in us from the reſpective reaſons by which they appear probable or improbable, than are the appearances of evident propoſitions from the reaſons by which they appear evident. Wherefore if it be rational and a perfection, to

be

be determined by an evident appearance, it is no leſs ſo to be determined by a probable or improbable appearance; and conſequently an imperfection not to be ſo determined.

It is not only an abſurdity, and by conſequence an imperfection, not to be equally and neceſſarily determined in our reſpective judgments, by probable and improbable, as well as by evident appearances, which I have juſt now proved; but even not to be neceſſarily determined by probable appearances, would be a greater imperfection, than not to be neceſſarily determined by evident appearances: becauſe almoſt all our actions are founded on the probable appearances of things, and few on the evident appearance of things. And therefore, if we could judge, that what appears probable, is not probable, but improbable or falſe; we ſhould be without the beſt rule of action and aſſent we can have.

2. Were

2. Were liberty defined, *a power to overcome our reaſon by the force of choice*, as a celebrated author may be ſuppoſed to mean, when he ſays, * *the will ſeems to have ſo great a power over the underſtanding, that the underſtanding, being over-ruled by the election of the will, not only takes what is good to be evil, but is alſo compelled to admit what is falſe to be true*; man would, with the exerciſe of ſuch a power, be the moſt irrational and inconſiſtent being, and by conſequence, the moſt imperfect underſtanding being, which can be conceived. For what can be more irrational and inconſiſtent, than to be able to refuſe our aſſent to what is evidently true to us, and to aſſent to what we ſee to be evidently falſe, and thereby inwardly give the lye to the underſtanding?

3. Were liberty defined *a power to will evil*, knowing it to be evil, *as well as good* †; that would be an imperfection in

* King de Orig. mali. p. 131. † Cheyne's Phil. Prin. c. 3. ſ. 13.

in man conſidered as a ſenſible being, if it be an imperfection in ſuch a being to be miſerable. For *willing evil*, is chuſing to be miſerable, and bringing knowingly deſtruction on ourſelves. Men are already ſufficiently unhappy by their ſeveral volitions, founded on the wrong uſe of their faculties, and on the miſtaken appearances of things. But what miſerable beings would they be, if inſtead of chuſing evil under the appearance of good (which is the only caſe wherein men now chuſe evil) they were indifferent to good and evil, and had the power to chuſe *evil as evil*, and did actually chuſe *evil as evil* in virtue of that power? They would in ſuch a ſtate, or with ſuch a liberty, be like infants that cannot walk, left to go alone, with liberty to fall: or like children, with knives in their hands: or laſtly like young rope-dancers, left to themſelves, on their firſt eſſays upon the rope, without any one to catch them if they fall.

And

And this miſerable ſtate, following from the ſuppoſition of liberty, is ſo viſible to ſome of the greateſt advocates thereof, that they acknowlege, that *created beings, when in a ſtate of happineſs ceaſe to have liberty* (that is, ceaſe to have liberty to chuſe evil) *being inviolably attached to their duty by the actual enjoyment of their felicity**.

4. Were liberty defined, as it is by ſome, *a power to will or chuſe at the ſame time any one out of two or more indifferent things*; that would be no perfection. For thoſe things called here indifferent or alike, may be conſidered, either as really different from each other, and that only ſeem indifferent or alike to us, through our want of diſcernment; or as exactly like each other. Now the more liberty we have in the firſt kind, that is, the more inſtances there are of things which ſeem alike to us and are not alike; the more miſtakes

* Bibl. Choiſie. Tom. xii. p. 95. Bramhall's Works, p. 655.

ſtakes and wrong choices we muſt run into. For if we had juſt notions, we ſhould know thoſe things were not indifferent or alike. This liberty therefore would be founded on a direct imperfection of our faculties. And as to a power of chuſing differently at the ſame time among things, really indifferent; what benefit, what perfection, would ſuch a power of chuſing be, when the things that are the ſole objects of our free choice are all alike?

5. Laſtly, a celebrated author ſeems to underſtand by liberty, *a faculty, which, being indifferent to objects, and over-ruling our paſſions, appetites, ſenſations, and reaſon, chuſes arbitrarily among objects; and renders the object choſen agreeable, only becauſe it has choſen it**.

My deſign here is to conſider this definition, with the ſame view, that I have conſidered the ſeveral foregoing definitions, *viz.* to ſhow, that liberty, inconſiſtent

* King de Orig. mali. c. 5.

inconſiſtent with neceſſity, however deſcribed or defined, is an imperfection. Referring therefore my reader for a confutation of this new notion of liberty to the other parts of my book, wherein I have already proved, that the exiſtence of ſuch an arbitrary faculty is contrary to experience, and impoſſible; that our paſſions, appetites, ſenſations, and reaſon, determine us in our ſeveral choices; and that we chuſe objects becauſe they pleaſe us, and not, as the author pretends ‡, that *objects pleaſe us, only becauſe we chuſe them*; I proceed to ſhew the imperfection of this laſt kind of liberty.

1. Firſt, the pleaſure or happineſs accruing from the liberty here aſſerted is leſs than accrues from the hypotheſis of neceſſity.

All the pleaſure and happineſs ſaid to attend this pretended liberty conſiſts * wholly in † creating pleaſure and happineſs by *chuſing objects*.

Now

‡ Pag. 113. * Page 107, 108. † Pag. 107.

Now man, conſidered as an intelligent neceſſary agent, would no leſs create this pleaſure and happineſs to himſelf by chuſing objects, than a being indued with the ſaid faculty; if it be true in fact, that *things pleaſe us, becauſe we chuſe them.*

But man, as an intelligent neceſſary agent, has theſe further pleaſures and advantages. He, by not being indifferent to objects, is moved by the goodneſs and agreeableneſs of them, as they appear to him, and as he knows them by reflection and experience. It is not in his power to be indifferent to what cauſes pleaſure or pain. He cannot reſiſt the pleaſure ariſing from the uſe of his paſſions, appetites, ſenſes, and reaſon: and if he ſuſpends his choice of an object, that is preſented to him, by any of theſe powers as agreeable; it is, becauſe he doubts or examines, whether upon the whole the object would make him happy; and becauſe he would gratify

gratify all theſe powers in the beſt manner he is able, or at leaſt ſuch of theſe powers as he conceives tend moſt to his happineſs. If he makes a choice which proves diſagreeable, he gets thereby an experience, which may qualify him to chuſe the next time with more ſatisfaction to himſelf. And thus wrong choices may turn to his advantage for the future. So that, at all times, and under all circumſtances, he is purſuing and enjoying the greateſt happineſs, which his condition will allow.

It may not be improper to obſerve, that ſome of the pleaſures he receives from objects, are ſo far from being the effect of choice, that they are not the effect of the leaſt premeditation or any act of his own, as in finding a treaſure on the road, or in receiving a legacy from a perſon unknown to him.

2. Secondly, this *arbitrary* * *faculty* would ſubject a man to more wrong choices,

* Pag. 147. to 150.

choices, than if he was determined in his choice.

A man, determined in his choice by the appearing nature of things, and the uſage of his intellectual powers, never makes a wrong choice, but by miſtaking the true relation of things to him. But a being, indifferent to * *all objects*, and ſwayed by no motives in his choice of objects, chuſes at a venture; and only makes a right choice, when † *it happens*, as the author juſtly expreſſes his notion, that he chuſes an object, which he can by his creating power render ſo agreeable, as that it may be called a *rightly choſen object*. Nor can this faculty be improved by any experience; but muſt ever continue to chuſe at a venture, or as it happens. For if this faculty improves by experience, and will have regard to the agreeableneſs or diſagreeableneſs of objects in themſelves; it is no longer the faculty

* Pag. 106. 111. † Pag. 106. 107. 113. 139, 141. 147.

faculty contended for, but a faculty moved and affected by the nature of things.

So that man, with a faculty of choice indifferent to all objects, muſt make more wrong choices, than man conſidered as a neceſſary being; in the ſame proportion, as *acting, as it happens*, is a worſe direction to chuſe right, than the uſe of our ſenſes, experience, and reaſon.

3. Thirdly, the exiſtence of ſuch an *arbitrary faculty*, to chuſe without regard to the qualities of objects, would deſtroy the uſe of our ſenſes, appetites, paſſions, and reaſon; which have been given us to direct us in our inquiries after truth, in our purſuit after happineſs, and to preſerve our beings. For, if we had a faculty, which choſe without regard to the notices and advertiſements of theſe powers, and by its choice overruled them; we ſhould then be indu-

ed with a faculty to defeat the end and uſes of theſe powers.

The perfection of neceſſity.

But the imperfection of liberty, inconſiſtent with neceſſity, will yet more appear by conſidering the great perfection of being neceſſarily determined.

Can any thing be perfect, that is not neceſſarily perfect? For whatever is not neceſſarily perfect may be imperfect, and is by conſequence imperfect.

Is it not a perfection in God neceſſarily to know all truth?

Is it not a perfection to him to be neceſſarily happy?

Is it not alſo a perfection in him to will and do always what is beſt? For if all things are indifferent to him, as ſome of the advocates of liberty aſſert,* and become good only by his willing them; he cannot have any motive from his own ideas, or from the nature of things, to will one thing rather than another; and conſequently he muſt will with-

* King de Orig. mali. p. 177.

without any reaſon or cauſe: which cannot be conceived poſſible of any being; and is contrary to this ſelf-evident truth, that *whatever has a beginning muſt have a cauſe.* But if things are not indifferent to him, he muſt be neceſſarily determined by what is beſt. Beſides, as he is a wiſe being, he muſt have ſome end and deſign: and as he is a good being, things cannot be indifferent to him, when the happineſs of intelligent and ſenſible beings depends on the will he has, in the formation of things. With what conſiſtency therefore can thoſe advocates of liberty aſſert God to be *a holy and good being*, * who maintain that *all things are indifferent* to him before he wills any thing; and that he may will, and do all things, which they themſelves eſteem wicked and unjuſt?

I cannot give a better confirmation of this argument from the conſiderati-

* Pag. 117.

on of the attributes of God, than by the judgment of the late biſhop of Sarum; which has the more weight, as proceeding from a great aſſerter of liberty, who by the force of truth is driven to ſay what he does. He grants, that *infinite perfection excludes ſucceſſive thoughts in God*; and *therefore* that *the eſſence of God is one perfect thought, in which he views and wills all things**. *And though his tranſient acts, ſuch as creation, providence and miracles, are done in a ſucceſſion of time; yet his immanent acts, his knowlege and decrees, are one with his eſſence.* And as he grants this to be a true notion of God, ſo he allows that *a vaſt difficulty ariſes* from it againſt the liberty of God. *For*, ſays he, *the immanent acts of God being ſuppoſed free, it is not eaſy to imagine how they ſhould be one with the divine eſſence; to which, neceſſary exiſtence does moſt certainly belong.* And *if the immanent*

* Expoſ. p. 26, 27.

manent acts of God are neceſſary, then the tranſient muſt be ſo likewiſe, as being the certain effects of his immanent acts: and a chain of neceſſary fate muſt run through the whole order of things: and God himſelf then is no free being, but acts by a neceſſity of nature. And this neceſſity, to which God is thus ſubject, is, adds he, *no abſurdity to ſome.* God is, according to them, *neceſſarily juſt, true, and good, by an intrinſic neceſſity that ariſes from his own infinite perfection.* And *from hence* they have *thought, that ſince God acts by infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, things could not have been otherwiſe than they are: for what is infinitely wiſe or good cannot be altered, or made either better or worſe.* And he concludes, that he *muſt leave this difficulty without pretending to explain it, or anſwer the objections that ariſe againſt all the ſeveral ways by which divines have endeavoured to reſolve it.*

Again, are not angels and other hea-

venly beings eſteemed more perfect than men*; becauſe, having a clear inſight into the nature of things, they are neceſſarily determined to judge right in relation to truth and falſhood, and to chuſe right in relation to good and evil, pleaſure and pain; and alſo to act right in purſuance of their judgment and choice? And therefore would not man be more perfect than he is, if by having a clear inſight into the nature of things, he was neceſſarily determined to aſſent to truth only, to chuſe only ſuch objects as would make him happy, and to act accordingly?

Further, is not man more perfect, the more capable he is of conviction? And will he not be more capable of conviction, if he be neceſſarily determined in his aſſent by what ſeems a reaſon to him, and neceſſarily determined in his ſeveral volitions by what ſeems good to him; than if he was indifferent

* Bramhall's Works, p. 656, 695.

different to propoſitions notwithſtanding any reaſon for them, or was indifferent to any objects notwithſtanding they ſeemed good to him? For otherwiſe, he could be convinced upon no principles, and would be the moſt undiſciplinable and untractable of all animals. All advice and all reaſonings would be of no uſe to him. You might offer arguments to him, and lay before him pleaſure and pain; and he might ſtand unmoved like a rock. He might reject what appears true to him, aſſent to what ſeems abſurd to him, avoid what he ſees to be good, and chuſe what he ſees to be evil. Indifference therefore to receive truth, that is, liberty to deny it when we ſee it; and indifference to pleaſure and pain, that is, liberty to refuſe the firſt and chuſe the laſt, are direct obſtacles to knowlege and happineſs. On the contrary, to be neceſſarily determined by what ſeems reaſonable, and by what ſeems good, has a

direct tendency to promote truth and happineſs, and is the proper perfection of an underſtanding and ſenſible being. And indeed it ſeems ſtrange that men ſhould allow that God and angels act more perfectly becauſe they are determined by reaſon; and alſo allow, that clocks, watches, mills, and other artificial unintelligent beings are the better, the more they are determined to go right by weight and meaſure; and yet that they ſhould deem it a perfection in man not to be determined by his reaſon, but to have liberty to go againſt it. Would it not be as reaſonable to ſay, it would be a perfection in a clock not to be neceſſarily determined to go right, but to have its motions depend upon chance?

Again, though man does through weakneſs and imperfection fall into ſeveral miſtakes both in judging and willingin relation to what is true and good; yet he is ſtill leſs ignorant and leſs unhappy by being neceſſarily determined

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in judging by what ſeems reaſonable, and in willing by what ſeems beſt, than if he was capable of judging contrary to his reaſon and willing againſt his ſenſes. For, were it not ſo, what ſeems falſe, would be as juſt *a rule of truth, as what ſeems true*; and what *ſeems evil*, as juſt *a rule of good*, as what *ſeems good*. Which are abſurdities too great for any to affirm; eſpecially if we conſider, that there is a perfectly wiſe and good being, who has given men ſenſes and reaſon to conduct them.

Laſtly, it is a perfection to be neceſſarily determined in our choices, even in the moſt indifferent things: becauſe, if in ſuch caſes there was not a cauſe of choice, but a choice could be made without a cauſe; then all choices might be made without a cauſe, and we ſhould not be neceſſarily determined by the greateſt evidence to aſſent to truth, nor by the ſtrongeſt inclination for happineſs to chuſe pleaſure and avoid pain;

to all which it is a perfection to be neceſſarily determined. For if any action whatſoever can be done without a cauſe; then effects and cauſes have no neceſſary relation, and by conſequence we ſhould not be neceſſarily determined in any caſe at all.

Fourth argument, taken from the conſideration of the divine preſcience.

IV. A fourth argument to prove man a neceſſary agent, ſhall be taken from the conſideration of the divine preſcience. The divine preſcience ſuppoſes, that all things future will certainly exiſt in ſuch time, ſuch order, and with ſuch circumſtances; and not otherwiſe. For if any things future were contingent, or uncertain, or depended on the liberty of man, that is, might or might not happen; their certain exiſtence could not be the object of the divine preſcience: it being a contradiction to know that to be certain, which is not certain: and God himſelf could only gueſs at the exiſtence of ſuch things. And if the divine preſcience

ſcience ſuppoſes the certain exiſtence of all things future, it ſuppoſes alſo the neceſſary exiſtence of all things future; becauſe God can fore-know their certain exiſtence only, either as that exiſtence is the effect of his decree, or as it depends on its own cauſes. If he foreknows that exiſtence, as it is the effect of his decree; his decree makes that exiſtence neceſſary: for it implies a contradicton for an all-powerful being to decree any thing which ſhall not neceſſarily come to paſs. If he foreknows that exiſtence, as it depends on its own cauſes; that exiſtence is no leſs neceſſary: for it no leſs implies a contradiction, that cauſes ſhould not produce their effects (cauſes and effects having a neceſſary relation to and dependance on each other) than that an event ſhould not come to paſs, which is decreed by God.

CICERO has ſome paſſages to the pur-

purpoſe of this argument. Says he, * *Qui poteſt provideri quidquam futurum eſſe quod neque cauſam habet ullam, neque notam, cur futurum ſit? — Quid eſt igitur, quod caſu fieri aut forte fortuna, putemus? —— Nihil eſt enim tam contrarium rationi et conſtantiae quam fortuna; ut mihi ne in Deum cadere videatur, ut ſciat, quid caſu et fortuito futurum ſit. Si enim ſcit, certe illud eveniet. Sin certe eveniet, nulla eſt fortuna. Eſt autem fortuna. Rerum igitur fortuitarum nulla eſt preſentio.* Alſo that illuſtrious reformer LUTHER ſays, in his *treatiſe againſt free-will:* ‡ *Conceſſa Dei praeſcientia et omnipotentia, ſequitur naturaliter irrefragabili conſequentia, nos per nos ipſos non eſſe factos, nec vivere, nec agere quicquam, ſed per illius omnipotentiam. Cum autem tales nos ille ante praeſcierit futuros, taleſque nunc faciat, moveat et gubernet; quid poteſt fingi quaeſo, quod in nobis*

* De Divin. c. 2. ‡ Cap. 147.

nobis liberum ſit, aliter et aliter fieri, quam ille preſcierit, aut nunc agat? Pugnat itaque ex diametro praeſcientia et omnipotentia Dei cum noſtro libero arbitrio. Aut enim Deus falletur praeſciendo, errabit et agendo, quod eſt impoſſibile, aut nos agemus et agemur ſecundum ipſius praeſcientiam et actionem. And our learned Dr. SOUTH ſays, * *The foreknowlege of any event does certainly and neceſſarily infer, that there muſt be ſuch an event; for as much as the certainty of knowlege depends upon the certainty of the thing known. And in this ſenſe it is, that God's decree and promiſe give a neceſſary exiſtence to the thing decreed or promiſed, that is to ſay, they infer it by infallible conſequence; ſo that it was as impoſſible for Chriſt not to riſe from the dead, as it was for God abſolutely to decree and promiſe a thing, and yet the thing not come to paſs.*

I could alſo bring in the greateſt divines

* Sermons. Vol. III. p. 488.

vines and * philoſophers who are aſſerters of liberty, as confirming this argument; for † they acknowlege, that they are unable to reconcile the divine preſcience and the liberty of man together: which is all I intended to prove by this argument, taken from the conſideration of the *divine preſcience*.

Fifth argument, taken from the nature of rewards and puniſhments.

V. A fifth argument to prove man a neceſſary agent, is as follows: if man was not a neceſſary agent, determined by pleaſure and pain, there would be no foundation for rewards and puniſhments, which are the ‡ *eſſential ſupports* of ſociety.

For if men were not neceſſarily determined by pleaſure and pain, or if pleaſure and pain were no cauſes to determine mens wills; of what uſe would be the proſpect of rewards to frame a man's will to the obſervation of the law,

* See among others Carteſii Prin. Pars I. Art. 41. Locke's Letters, p. 27. Tillotſon's Sermons, vol. VI. p. 157. † Stillingfleet, of Chriſt's ſatisfaction, p. 355. ‡ Solon rempublicam contineri dicebat duabus rebus, praemio et poena, Cicero Epiſt. 15. ad Brutum.

law, or puniſhments to hinder his tranſgreſſion thereof? Were pain, as ſuch, eligible, and pleaſure, as ſuch, avoidable; rewards and puniſhments could be no motives to a man, to make him do or forbear any action. But if pleaſure and pain have a neceſſary effect on men, and if it be impoſſible for men not to chuſe what ſeems good to them, and not to avoid what ſeems evil; the neceſſity of rewards and puniſhments is then evident, and rewards will be of uſe to all thoſe who conceive thoſe rewards to be pleaſure, and puniſhments will be of uſe to all thoſe who conceive them to be pain: and rewards and puniſhments will frame thoſe mens wills to obſerve, and not tranſgreſs the laws.

Beſides, ſince there are ſo many robbers, murderers, whoremaſters, and other criminals, who notwithſtanding the puniſhments threatened, and rewards promiſed, by laws, prefer breaking

ing the laws as the greater good or leſſer evil, and reject conformity to them as the greater evil or leſſer good; how many more would there be, and with what diſorders would not all ſocieties be filled, if rewards and puniſhments, conſidered as pleaſure and pain, did not determine ſome mens wills, but that, inſtead thereof, all men could prefer or will puniſhment conſidered as pain, and reject rewards conſidered as pleaſure? men would then be under no reſtraints.

Sixth argument, taken from the nature of morality.

VI. My ſixth and laſt argument to prove man a neceſſary agent is; if man was not a neceſſary agent determined by pleaſure and pain, he would have no notion of morality, or motive to practiſe it: the diſtinction between morality and immorality, virtue and vice, would be loſt; and man would not be a moral agent.

Morality, or virtue, conſiſts in ſuch actions as are in their own nature, and upon

upon the whole pleaſant * ; and immorality, or vice, conſiſts in ſuch actions as are in their own nature, and upon the whole painful. Wherefore a man muſt be affected with pleaſure and pain, in order to know what morality is, and to diſtinguiſh it from immorality. He muſt alſo be affected with pleaſure and pain, to have a reaſon to practiſe mortality; for there can be no motives, but pleaſure and pain, to make a man do or forbear any action. And a man muſt be the more moral, the more he underſtands or is duly ſenſible, what actions give pleaſure, and what pain; and muſt be perfectly moral, if neceſſarily determined by pleaſure and pain, rightly underſtood and apprehended. But if man be indifferent to pleaſure and pain, or is not duly affected with them; he cannot know what morality is, nor diſtinguiſh it from im-

* Locke's eſſay of Human Und. l. 2. c. 20. Serjeant's Solid. Philoſ. aſſerted, p. 215.

immorality, nor have any motive to practiſe morality, and abſtain from immorality; and will be equally indifferent to morality and immorality, or virtue and vice. Man in his preſent condition is ſufficiently immoral by miſtaking pain for pleaſure, and thereby judging, willing, and practiſing amiſs: but if he was indifferent to pleaſure and pain, he would have no rule to go by, and might never judge, will, and practiſe right.

Objections anſwered.

Though I conceive I have ſo propoſed my arguments, as to have obviated moſt of the plauſible objections uſually urged againſt the doctrine of neceſſity; yet it may not be improper to give a particular ſolution to the principal of them.

First objection.

1. Firſt then it is objected, that * *if men are neceſſary agents, and do commit neceſſarily all breaches of the law, it would be unjuſt to puniſh them for doing what they cannot avoid doing.*

To

* Auli Gellii noctes Att. l. 6. c. 2.

To which I anſwer, that the ſole end of puniſhment in ſociety is to prevent, as far as may be, the commiſſion of certain crimes: and that puniſhments have their deſigned effect two ways; firſt, by reſtraining or cutting off from ſociety the vicious members; and ſecondly, by correcting men or terrifying them from the commiſſion of thoſe crimes. Now let puniſhments be inflicted with either of theſe views, it will be manifeſt, that no regard is had to any free-agency in man, in order to render thoſe puniſhments juſt; but that on the contrary puniſhments may be juſtly inflicted on man though a neceſſary agent. For, firſt, if murderers for example, or any ſuch vicious members are cut off from ſociety, merely as they are public nuſances, and unfit to live among men; it is plain, they are in that caſe ſo far from being conſidered as free agents, that they are cut off from ſociety as a cankered branch is

Anſwer.

is from a tree, or as a mad dog is killed in the ſtreets. And the puniſhment of ſuch men is juſt, as it takes miſchievous members out of ſociety. Alſo for the ſame reaſon, furious madmen, whom all allow to be neceſſary agents, are in many places of the world, either the objects of judicial puniſhments, or are allowed to be diſpatched by private men. Nay, even *men infected with the plague*, who are not voluntary agents, and are guilty of no crime, are ſometimes thought to be juſtly cut off from ſociety, to prevent contagion from them. Secondly, let puniſhments be inflicted on ſome criminals with a view to terrify, it will appear, that in inflicting puniſhments with that view, no regard is had to any free-agency in man, in order to make thoſe puniſhments juſt. To render the puniſhment of ſuch men juſt, it is ſufficient that they were voluntary agents, or had the will to do the crime for which

which they ſuffer; for the law very juſtly and rightly regardeth only the will, and no other preceding cauſes of action. For example, ſuppoſe the law on pain of death forbids theft, and there be a man who by the ſtrength of temptation is neceſſitated to ſteal, and is thereupon put to death for it; doth not his puniſhment deter others from theft? Is it not a cauſe, that others ſteal not? Doth it not frame their wills to juſtice? Whereas, a criminal who is an involuntary agent, (as for inſtance, a man who has killed another in a chance medly, or while in a fever, or the like) cannot ſerve for an example to deter any others from doing the ſame; he being no more an intelligent agent in doing the crime, than an houſe is, which kills a man by its fall: and by conſequence the puniſhment of ſuch an involuntary agent would be unjuſt. When therefore a man does a crime voluntarily, and his puniſhment will ſerve to deter

deter others from doing the ſame, he *is juſtly puniſhed for doing what* (thro' ſtrength of temptation, ill habits, or other cauſes) *he could not avoid doing.*

It may not be improper to add this farther conſideration from the law of our country. There is one caſe, wherein our law is ſo far from requiring, that the perſons puniſhed ſhould be free-agents, that it does not conſider them as voluntary agents, or even as guilty of the crime for which they ſuffer: ſo little is free-agency requiſite to make puniſhments juſt. The children of rebel parents ſuffer in their fortunes for the guilt of their parents; and their puniſhment is deemed juſt, becauſe it is ſuppoſed to be a means to prevent rebellion in parents.

Second objection.

II. Secondly, it is objected, *that it is uſeleſs to threaten puniſhment or inflict it on men to prevent crimes, when they are neceſſarily determined in all their actions.*

1. To

1. To which I anſwer, firſt, that *threatening of puniſhments* is a cauſe which neceſſarily determines ſome mens wills to a conformity to law, and againſt committing the crimes to which puniſhments are annexed; and therefore is uſeful to all thoſe whoſe wills muſt be determined by it. It is as uſeful to ſuch men, as the ſun is to the ripening the fruits of the earth, or as any other cauſes are to produce their proper effects; and a man may as well ſay the ſun is uſeleſs, if the ripening the fruits of the earth be neceſſary, as ſay, there is no need of threatening puniſhment for the uſe of thoſe to whom threatening puniſhment is a neceſſary cauſe of forbearing to do a crime. It is alſo of uſe to ſociety to inflict puniſhments on men *for doing what they cannot avoid doing*, to the end that neceſſary cauſes may exiſt, to form the wills of thoſe who in virtue of them neceſſarily obſerve the laws; and alſo

First anſwer.

alſo of uſe to cut them off as noxious members of ſociety.

Second anſwer. 2. But ſecondly, ſo far is threatening and inflicting puniſhments from being uſeleſs, if men are neceſſary agents, that it would be uſeleſs to correct and deter (which are the principal effects deſigned to be obtained by threatening and inflicting puniſhments) unleſs men were neceſſary agents, and were determined by pleaſure and pain; becauſe, if men were free or indifferent to pleaſure and pain, pain could be no motive to cauſe men to obſerve the law.

Third anſwer. 3. Thirdly, men have every day examples before them of the uſefulneſs of puniſhments upon ſome intelligent or ſenſible beings, which they all contend are neceſſary agents. They puniſh dogs, horſes, and other animals, every day with great ſucceſs, and make them leave off their vicious habits, and form them thereby according to their wills. Theſe are plain facts, and matters of

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conſtant experience, and even confirmed by the evaſions of the advocates of liberty, who call * *the rewards and puniſhments* uſed to brute beaſts analogical; and ſay, that *beating them and giving them victuals, have only the ſhadow of rewards and puniſhments.* Nor are capital puniſhments without their uſe among beaſts and birds. RORARIUS tells us, ‡ that *they crucify lions in Africa to drive away other lions from their cities and towns*; and that *travelling through the country of* Juliers, he *obſerved, they hanged up wolves to ſecure their flocks.* And in like manner, with us, men hang up crows and rooks to keep birds from their corn, as they hang up murderers in chains to deter other murderers. But I need not go to brutes for examples of the uſefulneſs of puniſhments on neceſſary agents. Puniſhments are not without effect on ſome idiots

* Bramhall's Works, p. 685. ‡ Quod bruta anim. etc. l. 2. p. 109.

and madmen, by reſtraining them to a certain degree; and they are the very means by which the minds of children are formed by their parents. Nay, puniſhments have plainly a better effect on children, than on grown perſons; and more eaſily form them to virtue and diſcipline, than they change the vicious habits of grown perſons, or plant new habits in them. Wherefore the objectors ought to think puniſhments may be threatened and inflicted on men uſefully, though they are neceſſary agents.

Third objection.

3. Thirdly, it is objected, *if men are neceſſary agents, it is of no uſe to repreſent reaſons to them, or to entreat them, or to admoniſh them, or to blame them, or to praiſe them.*

Anſwer.

To which I anſwer, that all theſe, according to me, are neceſſary cauſes to determine certain mens wills to do what we deſire of them; and are therefore uſeful, as acting on ſuch neceſſary agents

agents to whom they are neceſſary cauſes of action; but would be of no uſe, if men had free-will, or their wills were not moved by them. So that they who make this objection muſt run into the abſurdities of ſaying, that *that cauſe is uſeful, which is no cauſe of action, and ſerves not to change the will*; and that *that cauſe is uſeleſs, which neceſſitates the effect*.

Let me add ſomething further in reſpect of praiſe. Men have at all times been praiſed for actions judged by all the world to be neceſſary. It has been a ſtanding method of commendation among the Epic poets, who are the greateſt panegyriſts of glorious actions, to attribute their hero's valour and his great actions, to ſome deity preſent with him and aſſiſting him. HOMER gives many of his heroes a god or a goddeſs to attend them in battle, or to be ready to help them in diſtreſs. VIRGIL deſcribes ÆNEAS as always

under the divine direction and aſſiſtance. And TASSO gives the Chriſtians in their holy war divine aſſiſtance.

Orators alſo and hiſtorians, think neceſſary actions the proper ſubjects of praiſe. CICERO*, when he maintained, that the gods inſpired MILO with the deſign and courage to kill CLODIUS, did not intend to leſſen the ſatisfaction or glory of MILO, but on the contrary to augment it. But can there be a finer commendation than that given by VELLEIUS PATERCULUS to CATO, that he *was good by nature, becauſe he could not be otherwiſe?* For, that alone is true goodneſs which flows from diſpoſition, whether that diſpoſition be natural or acquired. Such goodneſs may be depended on; and will ſeldom or ever fail. Whereas goodneſs founded on any reaſonings whatſoever, is a very precarious thing; as may be ſeen by the lives of the greateſt declaimers againſt

* Oratio pro Milone.

againſt vice, who though they are conſtantly acquainting themſelves with all the topics that can be drawn from the excellency of goodneſs or virtue, and the miſchiefs of vice; the rewards that attend the one, and the puniſhments that attend the other; yet are not better than thoſe, who are never converſant in ſuch topics. Laſtly, the common proverb, *gaudeant bene nati*, is a general commendation of men for what plainly in no ſenſe depends on them.

Fourth objection.

4. Fourthly, it is objected, that *if all events are neceſſary, then there is a period fixed to every man's life: and if there is a period fixed to every man's life, then it cannot be ſhortened by want of care or violence offered, or diſeaſes; nor can it be prolonged by care or phyſic: and if it cannot be ſhortened or prolonged by them, then it is uſeleſs to avoid or uſe any of theſe things.*

Anſwer.

In anſwer to which, I grant, that if

the period of human life be fixed, as I contend it is, it cannot but happen at the time fixed, and nothing can fall out to prolong or ſhorten that period. Neither ſuch want of care, nor ſuch violence offered, nor ſuch diſeaſes can happen as can cauſe the period of human life to fall ſhort of that time; nor ſuch care, nor phyſic be uſed, as to prolong it beyond that time. But though theſe cannot ſo fall out, as to ſhorten or prolong the period of human life; yet being neceſſary cauſes in the chain of cauſes to bring human life to the period fixed, or to cauſe it not to exceed that time, they muſt as neceſſarily precede that effect, as other cauſes do their proper effects; and conſequently when uſed or neglected, ſerve all the ends and purpoſes, that can be hoped for or feared from the uſe of any means, or the neglect of any means whatſoever: for example, let it be fixed and neceſſary for the river Nile annually to over-

overflow, the means, to cauſe it to overflow, muſt no leſs neceſſarily precede. And as it would be abſurd to argue, that *if the overflowing of the Nile was annually fixed and neceſſary, it would overflow, though the neceſſary means to make it overflow did not precede*; ſo it is no leſs abſurd to argue from the fixed period of human life, againſt the neceſſary means to bring it to its fixed period, or to cauſe it not to exceed that period.

Fifth objection.

5. Fifthly, it is aſked, *how a man can act againſt his conſcience, and how a man's conſcience can accuſe him, if he knows he acts neceſſarily, and alſo does what he thinks beſt when he commits any ſin?* I reply, that conſcience being a man's own opinion of his actions with relation to ſome rule, he may at the time of doing an action contrary to that rule, know that he breaks that rule; and conſequently act with reluctance, though not ſufficient to hin-

Anſwer.

der the action. But after the action is over, he may not only judge his action to be contrary to that rule; but by the abſence of the pleaſure of the ſin, and by finding himſelf obnoxious to ſhame, or by believing himſelf liable to puniſhment, he may *really accuſe himſelf*; that is, he may condemn himſelf for having done it, be ſorry he has done it, and wiſh it undone, becauſe of the conſequences that attend it.

Sixth objection. 6. Sixthly, it is objected, *that if all events are neceſſary, it was as impoſſible*, for example, *for* JULIUS CÆSAR *not to have died in the ſenate, as it is impoſſible for two and two to make ſix. But who will ſay the former was as impoſſible as the latter is, when we can conceive it poſſible for* JULIUS CÆSAR *to have died any where elſe as well as in the ſenate, and impoſſible to conceive two and two ever to make ſix.*

Anſwer. To which I anſwer, that I do allow, *that if all events are neceſſary, it*

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was as impoſſible for JULIUS CÆSAR *not to have died in the ſenate, as it is impoſſible for two and two to make ſix:* and will add, that it is no more poſſible to conceive the death of JULIUS CÆSAR to have happened any where elſe but in the ſenate, than that two and two ſhould make ſix. For whoever does conceive his death poſſible any where elſe, ſuppoſes other circumſtances preceding his death than did precede his death. Whereas let them ſuppoſe all the ſame circumſtances to come to paſs that did precede his death; and then it will be impoſſible to conceive, if they think juſtly, his death could have come to paſs any where elſe, as they conceive it impoſſible for two and two to make ſix. I obſerve alſo, that to ſuppoſe other circumſtances of any action poſſible, than thoſe that do precede it, is to ſuppoſe a contradiction or impoſſibility: for, as all actions have their particular circumſtances, ſo every circum-

ſtance preceding an action, is as impoſſible not to have come to paſs, by virtue of the cauſes preceding that circumſtance, as that two and two ſhould make ſix.

The opinions of the learned concerning liberty, etc.

Having, as I hope, proved the truth of what I have advanced, and anſwered the moſt material objections that can be urged againſt me; it will, perhaps, not be improper to give ſome account of the ſentiments of the learned in relation to my ſubject, and confirm by authority what I have ſaid, for the ſake of thoſe with whom authority has weight in matters of ſpeculation.

The queſtions of liberty, neceſſity, and chance, have been ſubjects of diſpute among philoſophers at all times; and moſt of thoſe philoſophers have clearly aſſerted neceſſity, and denyed liberty and chance.

The queſtions of liberty and neceſſity have alſo been debated among divines in the ſeveral ages of the Chriſtian church,

church, under the terms of free-will and predeſtination: and the divines, who have denyed free-will and aſſerted predeſtination, have inforced the arguments of the philoſophers, by the conſideration of ſome doctrines peculiar to the Chriſtan religion. And as to chance, hazard, or fortune, I think, divines unanimouſly agree, that thoſe words have no meaning.

Some Chriſtian communions have even proceeded ſo far in relation to theſe matters, as to condemn in councils and ſynods the doctrine of free-will as heretical; and the denial thereof is become a part of the *confeſſions of faith*, and *articles of religion*, of ſeveral churches.

From this ſtate of the fact, it is manifeſt, that whoever embraces the opinion I have maintained, cannot want the authority of as many learned and pious men, as in embracing the contrary.

But conſidering how little men are moved

moved by the authority of thoſe who profeſſedly maintain opinions contrary to theirs, though at the ſame time, they themſelves embrace no opinion but on the authority of ſome-body; I ſhall wave all the advantages that I might draw from the authority of ſuch philoſophers and divines as are undoubtedly on my ſide: and for that reaſon ſhall not enter into a more particular detail of them; but ſhall offer the authority of ſuch men, who profeſs to maintain liberty. There are indeed very few real adverſaries to the opinion I defend among thoſe who pretend to be ſo; and upon due inquiry it will be found, that moſt of thoſe, who aſſert liberty in words, deny the thing, when the queſtion is rightly ſtated. For proof whereof, let any man examine the cleareſt and acuteſt authors who have written for liberty, or diſcourſe with thoſe who think liberty a matter of experience, and he will

will ſee, that they allow, that the *will follows the judgment of the underſtanding; and that, when two objects are preſented to a man's choice, one whereof appears better than the other, he cannot chooſe the worſt*; that is, cannot chuſe *evil as evil.* And ſince they acknowlege theſe things to be true, they yield up the queſtion of liberty to their adverſaries, who only contend, that the will or choice is always determined by what ſeems beſt. I will give my reader one example thereof in the moſt acute and ingenious Dr. CLARKE, whoſe authority is equal to that of many others put together, and makes it needleſs to cite others after him. He aſſerts, * that *the will* is determined by *moral motives*, and calls the neceſſity, by which a man chooſes, in virtue of thoſe motives, *moral neceſſity.* And he explains himſelf with his uſual candor and perſpicuity by

* Demonſt. of the Being and Attribut. of God, p. 105. of the 4th Edition, 1716.

by the following inſtance. *A man*, ſays he, *intirely free from all pain of body and diſorder of mind, judges it unreaſonable for him to hurt or deſtroy himſelf; and being under no temptation or external violence, he* CANNOT POSSIBLY *act contrary to this judgment; not becauſe he wants a natural or phyſical power ſo to do, but becauſe it is abſurd and miſchievous, and morally impoſſible for him to chooſe to do it. Which alſo is the very ſame reaſon, why the moſt perfect rational creatures, ſuperior to men, cannot do evil; not becauſe they want a natural power to perform the material action, but becauſe it is morally impoſſible, that with a perfect knowlege of what is beſt, and without any temptation to evil, their will ſhould determine itſelf to chooſe to act fooliſhly and unreaſonably.*

In this he plainly allows the neceſſity, for which I have contended. For he aſſigns the ſame cauſes of human actions

ctions that I have done; and extends the neceſſity of human actions as far, when he aſſerts, that a man cannot, under thoſe cauſes, *poſſibly do the contrary to what he does*; and particularly, that a man, under the circumſtances of *judging it unreaſonable to hurt or deſtroy himſelf, and being under no temptation or external violence, cannot poſſibly act contrary to that judgment*. And as to *a natural or phyſical power* in man *to act contrary to that judgement*, and to hurt or deſtroy himſelf, which is aſſerted in the foregoing paſſage; that is ſo far from being inconſiſtent with the doctrine of neceſſity, that the ſaid *natural power to do the contrary*, or *to hurt* or deſtroy himſelf, is a conſequence of the doctrine of neceſſity. For, if man is neceſſarily determined by particular moral cauſes, and *cannot then poſſibly act contrary* to what he does; he muſt under oppoſite moral cauſes, have *a power to do the contrary*. Man,

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as determined by moral cauſes, cannot poſſibly chooſe evil, as evil, and by conſequence chooſes life before death, while he apprehends life to be a good, and death to be an evil; as, on the contrary, he chooſes death before life, while he apprehends death to be a good, and life to be an evil. And thus moral cauſes, by being different from one another or differently underſtood, do determine men differently; and by conſequence ſuppoſe a natural power to chooſe and act as differently, as thoſe cauſes differently determine them.

If therefore men will be governed by authority in the queſtions before us, let them ſum up the real aſſerters of the liberty of man, and they will find them not to be very numerous; but on the contrary, they will find far the greater part of the pretended aſſerters of liberty, to be real aſſerters of neceſſity.

The author's notion of liberty.

I ſhall conclude this diſcourſe with obſerving, that though I have contend-

ed,

ed, that liberty from neceſſity is contrary to experience, that it is impoſſible; and if poſſible, that it is an imperfection; that it is inconſiſtent with the divine perfections; and that it is ſubverſive of laws and morality: yet, to prevent all objections to me, founded on the equivocal uſe of the word liberty, which like all words employed in debates of conſequence has various meanings affixed to it, I think myſelf obliged to declare my opinion, that I take man to have a truly valuable liberty of another kind. He has *a power to do as he wills, or pleaſes.* Thus, if he wills, or pleaſes to ſpeak or be ſilent; to ſit or ſtand; to ride or walk; to go this way or that way; to move faſt or ſlow; or, in fine, if his will changes like a weather-cock, he is able to do as he wills or pleaſes: unleſs prevented by ſome reſtraint or compulſion, as by being gagged; being under an acute

acute pain; being forced out of his place; being confined; having convulſive motions; having loſt the uſe of his limbs; or ſuch-like cauſes.

He has alſo the ſame power in relation to the actions of his mind, as to thoſe of his body. If he wills or pleaſes, he can think of this or that ſubject; ſtop ſhort or purſue his thoughts; deliberate or defer deliberation or reſume deliberation as he pleaſes; reſolve or ſuſpend his reſolution as he pleaſes; and, in fine, can every moment change his object when he pleaſes; unleſs prevented by pain, or a fit of an apoplexy; or ſome ſuch intervening reſtraint and compulſion.

And is it not a great perfection in man to be able, in relation both to his thoughts and actions, to do as he wills or pleaſes, in all thoſe caſes of pleaſure and intereſt? Nay, can a greater and more beneficial power in man be conceived

ceived, than to be able to do as he wills, or pleaſes? And can any other liberty be conceived beneficial to him? Had he this power or liberty in all things, he would be omnipotent!

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THE END. *Jan. 16, 1858.*

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